

REMARKS

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §102

In the Non-Final Office Action mailed June 5, 2003, the Examiner reviewed claims 1, 8, 10-13, 16 and 18. Pursuant to §102(e), the Examiner rejected each of these claims. Applicant has amended its claims and believes the claims as pending to be allowable over the cited references.

Specifically, claim 1 includes the limitations of original claim 8. Claim 8 requires in pertinent part “said stabilizer bar pressing into said outer layer as said stabilizer bar twists to increase said level of stiffness of said stabilizer bar.” The Examiner originally rejected claim 8 based on *Hadano, et al.* (6,474,631) pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §102(e). However, *Hadano, et al.* does not disclose this particular feature. Indeed, as noted by the specification of *Hadano, et al.*, each of the embodiments including the prior art embodiments teach a bushing “...having an inner surface formed by a resin layer having high sliding properties (low friction coefficient).” [*Hadano, et al.*, column 1, ll 47-49]. Consequently, it is not surprising that *Hadano, et al.* fails to teach the feature of increasing stiffness of the stabilizer bar to twisting of the bushings of *Hadano, et al.* because each of the bushings of *Hadano, et al.* slides relative to the stabilizer bar. As noted further by the specification of *Hadano, et al.*, this high sliding feature allows the bushing to move relative to the stabilizer bar to prevent the creation of “abnormal noise.” [*Hadano, et al.*, column 13, ll 58-63]. The Examiner misplaces reliance on Figure 9 of *Hadano, et al.* Specifically, this figure as well as like Figures 6 and 7 appear to relate to the vulcanizability of the rubber material, not any affect on a stabilizer bar of the structure. [*Hadano, et al.*, column 8, ll 56 - Column 9, ll 10]. Consequently, because

Hadano, et al. fails to teach the particular limitation of original claim 8, claim 1, which now incorporates this feature, is in condition for allowance.

Claim 13 has also been amended to incorporate this feature. The limitations of claim 16 have been added to claim 13. Again, because *Hadano, et al.* fails to teach the feature of twisting to increase the stiffness of the stabilizer bar, claim 13 is in condition for allowance.

Claim 18 also incorporates the following limitation: “axially twisting said stabilizer bar” and “varying a level of stiffness of said stabilizer bar from said lower level during initial twist to said higher level after said initial twist.” Again, these features are not taught by *Hadano, et al.* as explained above. Therefore, claim 18 is in condition for allowance.

Applicant has further added new claim 19 and 20 which incorporate this novel feature. Claim 19 requires “said passive structure for interacting with said stabilizer bar to vary a level of stiffness of said stabilizer bar by axially twisting of said passive structure relative to said stabilizer bar.” Claim 20 further requires “wherein axially twisting of said passive structure increases the level of stiffness of said stabilizer bar.”

Again, neither of these features are taught by *Hadano, et al.* Therefore, claim 19 and 20 are in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

CARLSON, GASKEY & OLDS

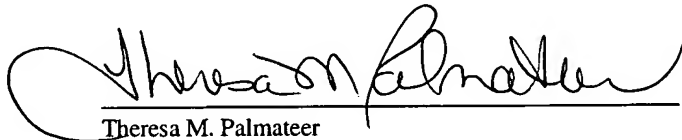
By: 

Anthony P. Cho
Registration No. 47,209
400 W. Maple Rd., Ste. 350
Birmingham, MI 48009
(248) 988-8360

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that the enclosed Amendment is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to Commissioner for Patents, P. O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on August 28, 2003.


Theresa M. Palmateer